
Creative Writing Division Rules

The Creative Writing Division differs from categories in the Drama Division which are judged on **performance** qualities (such as stage presence, expressiveness, and interpretation) of an entry. Entries submitted into the Creative Writing Division will be judged based upon the merit of the original work, creative content, message clarity, use of language, originality of topic or idea, and overall strength.

Note: Following the national creative writing judging process, the top three winners in each category will be notified via their staff contact person. The top three creative writing winning entries will be offered the opportunity for inclusion in a booklet that will be distributed by November, 2015.

1. All entries submitted into the Creative Writing Division must be original compositions written solely by the eligible Veteran(s) who is submitting the entry.
2. It is recommended that all Creative writing entries be video recorded and submitted along with the necessary paperwork. Creative Writing entries must adhere to the text length and spacing indicated within each category description. Entries submitted without a video are still eligible for competing at the national level however these entries will not be eligible for consideration to be in the stage show.
3. Entries may be performed by someone else, but the Veteran author(s) must also appear in the video. Specify on the Entry Form the name(s) of the person(s) reading the composition.
4. **An E-mail** containing a separate attachment for each entry of the double-spaced typed text (do not send scanned copies of the text) of **all creative writing entries MUST also be e-mailed** to Liz Nealy (ngraphics04@att.net) or **uploaded to the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition SharePoint site** (<https://vaww.visn23.portal.va.gov/stc/NVCACompetition>) in order for the entry to be accepted and judged at the national level. The name of the eligible Veteran(s) who is shown on the video must also be included on the document. This applies to each entry in all creative writing categories. ***In the subject line of the email indicate the VA facility submitting the entry AND the title of the piece.***
5. If an entry has won a gold medal on the national level of competition in any category it MAY NOT BE re-submitted into the Creative Writing division in a subsequent year.
6. Judges reserve the right to move an entry to the appropriate category or disqualify the entry if rules are not followed.
7. If the composition is selected for inclusion in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival stage show, the reader will be selected by the NVCAF national committee. The reader may or may not be the Veteran author. The Veteran author will be invited to attend the Festival and participate as a chorus member, if his/her entry is selected for inclusion in the Festival stage show.
8. Collections of poems, essays, stories, etc. submitted as one entry will not be allowed.

9. Each video recorded entry must contain a title slide/page that includes the category number, category name, title of piece and name of Veteran(s) in the entry. The time it takes for the title page to be viewed does not count against the 3 minute entry.

Note: VA staff contact persons will be notified via E-mail with the 2015 competition results.

Creative Writing Division Categories

1. **Poetry – Humorous** - A verse composition of humorous nature, **no longer than 48 lines** in length, written by one eligible Veteran.
2. **Poetry – Inspirational** - Same as #1, but of an inspirational nature.
3. **Poetry – Patriotic** - Same as #1, but relating to American patriotism.
4. **Poetry – Other** - Same as #1, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of poetry-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
5. **Essay – Humorous** - An essay, **no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length**, written in ordinary speech or writing (not poetry) by one eligible Veteran that is **a discussion of a topic from the author's personal point of view** as influenced by subjective experience and personal reflection, is a non-fiction work, often expository, and humorous in nature. Entries submitted into this category must have an introduction, a statement of viewpoint, supportive points, and a conclusion summary.
6. **Essay – Inspirational** - Same as #5, but of an inspirational nature.
7. **Essay – Patriotic** - Same as #5, but reflective of American patriotism.
8. **Essay – Other** - Same as #5, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of essay-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
9. **Personal Experience – Humorous** - A story or situation of humorous content, **no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length**, that is **written by one eligible Veteran in the first person** and conveyed about one's self.
10. **Personal Experience – Inspirational** - Same as #9, but with inspirational content.
11. **Personal Experience – Patriotic** - Same as #9, but with content that relates to American patriotism.

12. **Personal Experience – Other** - Same as #9, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of personal experience-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories. Could include wartime-related experiences, though stories/situations with wartime-related content may also be suitable for personal experience-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
13. **Short, Short Story – Humorous** - A very short story, **no longer than 500 words in length** that is written by one eligible Veteran and that is of humorous content. The story must have a beginning, middle, and an end. Entries received that contain more than 500 words will be disqualified.
14. **Short, Short Story – Inspirational** - Same as #13, but with inspirational content.
15. **Short, Short Story – Patriotic** - Same as #13, but with content that relates to American patriotism.
16. **Short, Short Story – Other** - Same as #13, but does not more appropriately meet the definitions of short, short story-humorous, inspirational or patriotic categories.
17. **Monologue/Duologue** - Monologue is a part of a script written by an eligible Veteran for one actor. Duologue is a part of a script written by an eligible Veteran for two actors. **Entries in this category must be no longer than 3 double-spaced pages in length.**
18. **Group Creative Writing** - Any of the above categories (#1-17) written as a group of eligible Veterans. **All specific category rules still apply when entering the group creative writing category.** (For example, a group of Veterans work together to write a patriotic poetry entry. The entry must still follow the rules of category #3.) **Only one entry written by the group members is allowed.** Any one person or persons may read the entry but all eligible Veterans who contributed in writing the composition must appear in the video. Any compositions written by more than one eligible Veteran must be entered in this category (Group Creative Writing) regardless of the type of composition.
19. **Special Recognition** - Solo or group. **All specific category rules still apply when entering the special recognition category.** Original entries that recognize individuals who exhibit creative expression through the use of creative writing while possessing significant physical or psychological limitations. The intent of this category is to reinforce the concept of the arts as therapy, where an individual uses artistic expression to facilitate successful treatment outcomes. Entries and their accompanying written statements from the Veteran's VA staff contact person should focus on how the arts are used by the individual(s) to rise above severe limitations.

Entries in this category **MUST** include:

- **Solo or Group Entry form**

- **a written statement/narrative** (25 to 225 words) by a VA staff person or the Veteran of why the Veteran is deserving of special recognition
- **Form 10-3203 – 2 pages (Consent for Production and Use of Verbal or Written Statements, Photographs, Digital Images, and/or Video or Audio Recordings by VA)** signed by the Veteran and VA staff contact person
- **Form 10-5345 – 1 page (Request For and Consent to Release Medical Records or Health Information)** signed by the Veteran